

LITTERATURANALYSE OG -TEORI

Mandag den 14. januar 2002

kl. 9.00 - 13.00

Hjælpemidler: *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*
Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English
Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
Chambers Universal Learners' Dictionary
The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary
M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*

TIL DENNE EKSAMEN ANVENDES EKSAMENSNUMRE

Der ønskes en besvarelse på engelsk af nedenstående spørgsmål.

Write a critical essay, in English, on Edith Sitwell's "Still Falls the Rain." You should consider the significance of Christian elements for the appraisal of the situation during the Blitz in London, 1940, and you should also consider the importance of repetitive patterns for the structural uniqueness of the poem.

Still Falls the Rain

The Raids, 1940.¹Night and Dawn.

Still falls the Rain –
Dark as the world of man, black as our loss –
Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails
Upon the Cross.

Still falls the Rain
With a sound like the pulse of the heart that is changed to the hammerbeat
In the Potter's Field,² and the sound of the impious feet
On the Tomb:
 Still falls the Rain

¹ During the Battle of Britain, the German air force carried out many raids on London, often with incendiary bombs.

² Cf. Matthew 27.3-8: "Then Judas, which betrayed [Jesus], when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the 30 pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? see you to it. And he cast down the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And the priests took the pieces of silver . . . and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day."

In the Field of Blood where the small hopes breed and the human brain
Nurtures its greed, that worm with the brow of Cain.¹

Still falls the Rain

At the feet of the Starved Man hung upon the Cross.
Christ that each day, each night, nails there, have mercy on us –
On Dives and on Lazarus:²
Under the Rain the sore and the gold are as one.

Still falls the Rain –

Still falls the Blood from the Starved Man's wounded Side:
He bears in His Heart all wounds, - those of the light that died,
The last faint spark
In the self-murdered heart, the wounds of the sad uncomprehending dark,
The wounds of the baited bear,³ -
The blind and weeping bear whom the keepers beat
On his helpless flesh . . . the tears of the hunted hare.

Still falls the Rain –

Then – O Ile leape up to my God: who pulles me doune –
See, see where Christ's blood streames in the firmament:⁴
It flows from the Brow we nailed upon the tree
Deep to the dying, to the thirsting heart
That holds the fires of the world, - dark-smirched with pain
As Caesar's laurel crown.⁵

Then sounds the voice of One who like the heart of man
Was once a child who among beasts has lain –
"Still do I love, still shed my innocent light, my Blood, for thee."

(Published 1942.)

¹ The first murderer (Genesis 4).

² In Jesus's parable, the rich man Dives was sent to hell, while the leprous beggar Lazarus went to heaven (Luke 16,19-31). This is not the same Lazarus who was raised from the dead.

³ A medieval and Elizabethan sport in which dogs fought a bear chained to a post.

⁴ Faustus's despairing cry at the end of Marlowe's plays, *Doctor Faustus*, when he realizes that he has been damned for his pact with Mephistopheles.

⁵ Traditionally worn by victorious generals, and perhaps here associated with Jesus's crown of thorns (Matthew 27.29).